

Report on the Official Launching Ceremony of the National Disability Strategic Plan (NDSP) 2014-2018 and the Fifth Anniversary of the Law on the Protection and the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



3 July 2014 | Phnom Penh, Cambodia



**Australian
Aid** 



The Official Launching Ceremony of the National Disability Strategic Plan (NDSP) 2014-2018 and the Fifth Anniversary of the Law on the Protection and the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

organized by

Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), Cambodia

Disability Action Council (DAC), Cambodia



in collaboration with

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD)

Persons with Disabilities Foundation, Cambodia



3 July 2014
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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Opening speech by H.E. Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN

SUMMARY OF THE CEREMONY

The Official Launching Ceremony of the National Disability Strategic Plan (NDSP) 2014-2018 and the Fifth Anniversary of the Law on the Protection and the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was organized by the Royal Government of Cambodia through the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY) and the Disability Action Council (DAC) in Phnom Penh on 3 July 2014. The event was co-organized by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability (APCD), and the Persons with Disabilities Foundation. Among the co-sponsors included the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Attended by more than 3,000 participants, the event was presided over by Cambodian Prime Minister H.E. Samdech Akeak Moha Sena Padei Decho Hun Sen who extolled the Plan as an effective tool in addressing disability issues. H.E. Mr. Vong Sauth, Minister of MoSVY, kindly addressed the contribution of partners including APCD in relation to grassroot activities in partnership with the Government of Cambodia. The event also featured the official handover of the National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 to MoSVY.

All partners expressed their willingness to collaborate with the Government of Cambodia, persons with disabilities and their organizations, and other partners in line with the adopted NDSP 2014-2018.



Persons with disabilities show their support for Cambodia's National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018

MEDIA COVERAGE

The Phnom Penh Post



Prime Minister Hun Sen greets a young boy at the launch of the National Strategic Plan on Disability 2014-2018 on Phnom Penh's Koh Pich. © Heng Chivoan



TVK Channel - Khmer Live TV



Cambodia launches 5-year strategic plan to support disabled persons

Published: 03-Jul-14 03:20PM



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen (2nd R) greets disabled people in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, July 3, 2014. Hun Sen on Thursday launched a five-year national disability strategic plan (2014-2018) with an

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen speaks in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, July 3, 2014. Hun Sen on Thursday launched a five-year national disability strategic plan (2014-2018) with an aim to improve the living standard and to promote the rights of the persons with disabilities. (Xinhua/Photo)

◀ 1 of 2 ▶

PHNOM PENH (Xinhua) -- Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Thursday launched a five-year national disability strategic plan (2014-2018) with an aim to improve the living standard and to promote the rights of the persons with disabilities.

"The strategic plan, consisting of ten goals, is the necessary foundation and backbone to uplift the situation of disabled persons in Cambodia," the prime minister said at the launching ceremony, which was attended by about 3,000 persons with disabilities.

He said the goals include poverty reduction, equitable healthcare, judicial service, elimination of discrimination, education, freedom of expression, participation in politics, public transport and communication means, assurance of gender equity, and strengthening and expansion of international cooperation for disabled persons.

"This plan outlines a vision to enhance the life quality of persons with disabilities and their families and enable them to participate on an equal footing in society," he said. "I am strongly convinced that this plan is a dynamic policy tool helping address disability issues."

Vong Sauth, minister of social affairs, veterans and youth rehabilitation, said the country has about 301,629 persons with disabilities, equivalent to 2.06 percent of the total population of 14.67 million.

"Disability in Cambodia is a challenge that needs strong attention, as it causes loss to the national budget, impacts on the socio-economic position and the livelihood of people," he said.

5-year strategic plan to support disabled persons launched

Thursday, 03 July 2014; News by Khmer Times



A disabled person exercises on February 19, 2009 at the Kien Kheang Physical Rehabilitation center. Five year program to improve disabled people's living standard launched.

PHNOM PENH, (Khmer Times) -- Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Thursday launched a five-year national disability strategic plan (2014-2018) with an aim to improve the living standard and to promote the rights of the persons with disabilities.

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However, other estimates have put about 5% of Cambodia's population as disabled.

People with disabilities are among the most vulnerable groups in Cambodian society. They lack equal access to education, training and employment.

This constant lack of opportunity alienates them from fully participating in their communities. While many workers with disabilities have considerable skills, many have not had the opportunity to develop their potential.

Cambodia also works to achieve targets set in the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five Towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and Pacific.

The CAMBODIA DAILY

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Disability Initiatives Launched as Jobs Quota Not Met

BY HOLLY ROBERTSON AND KHY SOVUTHY | JULY 5, 2014

For Cambodians with disabilities, the launch of two major initiatives in the past two days designed to improve their lives has brought some optimism about the future—tempered by a note of caution.

At Koh Pich island on Thursday, in front of a crowd of more than 2,000 people, including many with disabilities, Prime Minister Hun Sen unveiled a five-year National Disability Strategic Plan (NDSP) consisting of 10 goals to promote the rights of disabled persons.

These included poverty reduction, the elimination of discrimination, improved access to education, participation in politics and equitable healthcare.

The promulgation of the NDSP was followed by the launch on Friday of a program—funded by the Australian government in conjunction with the U.N.—that will see \$13.1 million poured into the disability sector over the next five years.

Claire Van der Vaeren, the U.N.'s resident coordinator in Cambodia, said it was one of the largest disability programs of its kind in the world.

"Within the next five years, the program aims to ensure that persons with disabilities have increased opportunities for participation in social, economic, cultural and political life through effective implementation of the National Disability Strategic Plan," she said in a speech at the launch event.

According to the U.N.'s website, the program is meant to set in motion efforts that will ultimately lead to the "improved quality of life for persons with disabilities in Cambodia."

But this is described as an "aspirational goal which will not be fully achieved within the life of the program, given the limited resources available in relation to the scale of the problem."

The program will focus on four areas: supporting the government's coordination of the NDSP, strengthening the capacity of disabled people's organizations, working to improve physical rehabilitation centers and working with provincial and commune officials to promote disability inclusiveness.

Ngin Saorath, executive director of the Cambodian Disabled People's Organization, praised the increased efforts to address the needs of disabled people, but said unless the government also allocated substantial funding to the cause, its five-year plan was "only a piece of paper."

He called on the government to commit three to five percent of its annual budget to disability issues.

"For us, [the NDSP] goals are very big and beautiful but what we worry about is how the government, without the budget from the Interior Ministry and based on limited human resources, will properly implement the goals of the strategic plan," he said.

These new initiatives come as a deadline lapses for all government agencies to have disabled people making up at least 2 percent of their workforce—in line with the 2.06 percent of the total population that the Ministry of Social Affairs counts as disabled.

The July 2015 deadline was set down in a sub-decree that was part of the Disability Law, enacted in July 2009, but Mr. Saorath said that to date, only 1.26 percent of the state's workforce was disabled.

In his speech launching the NDSP on Thursday, Mr. Hun Sen urged ministries and institutions to adhere to the two percent quota but announced that the Ministry of Education would be exempt, alongside the already exempt Royal Palace Ministry, as disabled persons would find teaching too difficult.

"Among 190,000 civil servants, there are more than 110,000 teachers," Mr. Hun Sen said, noting that many disabled people cannot stand for long periods of time, and therefore are not fit to teach.

"So if [we] put two percent into the Ministry of Education, it could kill the Ministry of Education. This is a problem we must think [about]."

HOME » LATEST NEWS

Cambodia launches 5-year strategic plan to support disabled persons

Jul 03, 2014

PHNOM PENH, July 3 (Xinhua) -- Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Thursday launched a five-year national disability strategic plan (2014-2018) with an aim to improve the living standard and to promote the rights of the persons with disabilities.

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He said the goals include poverty reduction, equitable healthcare, judicial service, elimination of discrimination, education, freedom of expression, participation in politics, public transport and communication means, assurance of gender equity, and strengthening and expansion of international cooperation for disabled persons.

"This plan outlines a vision to enhance the life quality of persons with disabilities and their families and enable them to participate on an equal footing in society," he said. "I am strongly convinced that this plan is a dynamic policy tool helping address disability issues."

Vong Sauth, minister of social affairs, veterans and youth rehabilitation, said the country has about 301,629 persons with disabilities, equivalent to 2.06 percent of the total population of 14.67 million.

"Disability in Cambodia is a challenge that needs strong attention, as it causes loss to the national budget, impacts on the socio-economic position and the livelihood of people," he said.

PROGRAMME

06:30-07:00: Arrival of participants

07:00-07:30: Arrival of national and international honored guests

07:30-08:00: Arrival of senior government officers

8:00-10:00:

- National anthem

- Welcome speech by H.E. Mr. Vong Sauth, Minister of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and Vice President of Disability Action Council

- Speech by H.E. Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia and Honorary President of Disability Action Council

- Handing over the National Disability Strategic Plan (NDSP) 2014-2018 to H.E. Mr. Vong Sauth, Minister of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and Vice President of Disability Action Council

- Returning of H.E. Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN, Prime Minister of Kingdom of Cambodia and Honorary President of Disability Action Council



Handover of National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018
to H.E. Mr. Vong Sauth, Minister of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and
Vice President of Disability Action Council

SPEECH

by **H.E. Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN**

Your Excellencies, Members of the Royal Government, Ambassadors, Distinguished National and International Guests,
Beloved Persons with Disabilities, Teachers and Students,

Today, I am delighted to attend the launch of the “National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and the celebration of the 5th Anniversary of the Law on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”. This event offers us an opportunity to understand latest disability-related developments and review the progress to date to identify the work to be done and shortages for the cause of ensuring the basic rights of persons with disabilities, creating more opportunities for them, facilitating their participation in socio-economic development without barriers and discrimination, and enabling them to live on equal footing and equal rights in the society.

This event indeed highlights the strong political will and commitment of the Royal Government of Cambodia to protect and promote the rights of the persons with disabilities, especially the right to life, the right to special protection, the right to work and the right to full participation in socio-economic development. Overall, Cambodia has always paid special attention to the disability sector, therefore, great achievement in this sector. There has been improvement to the share of persons with disabilities in both public and private sector; allocation of social land concession to persons with disabilities for housing construction and family-based farming; provision of public education, healthcare, physical rehabilitation service and vocational training; development of Braille and sign language; construction of wheelchair ramps for buildings, especially the establishment of national-level and institutional-level mechanisms, such as the National Disability Action Council and the Disability Fund, to coordinate and promote disability work.

The National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 is the necessary foundation and backbone for improving the living standards and promoting the rights of the persons with disabilities in Cambodia, which is a major contribution to the enforcement of the law on protection and promotion of the rights of the persons with disabilities, the implementation of the convention on the Asia and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities 2013-2022, the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” and the Rectangular Strategy – Phase III of the Royal Government of Cambodia. In sum, the National Disability Strategic Plan consists of ten goals viz. poverty reduction for persons of disabilities; provision of equal and quality and equitable healthcare, including occupational, physical and mental rehabilitation; provision of judicial service; elimination of discrimination, mistreatment and exploitation; provision of education; their freedom to expression and access to information; their participation in politics and development; facilitation of their use of public transport and communication means; assurance of gender equity and empowerment of women and children; and strengthening and expansion of international cooperation.

Indeed, the National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 outlines the vision to enhance the quality of life of persons with disabilities and their families and enable them to participate on equal footing in a society which promotes rights and dignity, justice services and independent living; is free from torturing, mistreatment, exploitation and violence; provides emergency relief assistance when needed; and incorporates disability into all sectoral development. Overall, through this vision, we are fully aware that persons with disabilities must receive special attention and treatment since their physical and mental capacities are different from normal people. Persons and children with disabilities must be included in all development activities. We must also change social attitude toward and views on persons with disabilities by acknowledging their actions and take into account their voice to promote inclusive socio-economic development.

I am strongly convinced that this National Disability Strategic Plan is a dynamic policy tool helping address disability issues. In addition, this work requires regular monitoring, evaluation and improvement to respond to the constantly evolving circumstance. In this spirit, I strongly believe that we will implement this National Disability Strategic Plan successfully and effectively to move toward a barrier-free society which provides opportunities to persons with disabilities.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to commend highly the Disability Action Council, the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, related ministries/institutions, land authorities, development partners, NGOs and persons with disabilities for contributing to the preparation of this historic strategy. I also commend highly the achievement as well as programs to date aimed to prevent disabilities such as vaccination, disability prevention treatment, medical treatment, physical therapy, physical rehabilitation, elimination of polio from birth, mine clearance, implementation and dissemination of the Law on Land Traffic, suppression of violent acts and integration of persons with disabilities into the society. These achievements highlight our concerted effort to prevent disabilities and support and encourage persons with disabilities aimed to restore their occupational capacity and incorporate disabilities into all socio-economic activities to ensure their full contribution to the society.

In general, disability exists in all countries and is the global concern that must be addressed. Nowadays, there are around one billion persons with disabilities in the world, amongst them, 200 million are facing hardships. In particular, there are around 650 million persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, which is equivalent to 15% of the regional population, requiring immediate response. There is a projection that disabilities will become a grave concern in the coming years due to the global increase in disabilities caused by chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, heart attack, stroke and so on. This requires our attention on seeking immediate response including the enhancement of social welfare, physical and mental rehabilitation, vaccination, increase in public awareness on the causes of disabilities etc. In addition, we must keep in mind that Cambodians are vulnerable to disabilities, due to landmines and UXOs, traffic accidents, occupational accidents and diseases.

Indeed, we have continuously striven to enhance the welfare of Cambodians with disabilities. Moreover, in addressing disabilities, Cambodia ratified the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities on December 20, 2012 which later came into force on January 19, 2013. Besides, we are proud that the Kingdom of Cambodia was the first member state of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) that adopted the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific 2013-2022 that provides the first set of regionally agreed disability-inclusive development goals and acts as a roadmap for enhancing the living standard and promoting the rights of around 650 million persons with disabilities in the Asia Pacific and put in into implementation on May 29, 2013.

Furthermore, Cambodia has also ratified several conventions including the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and their Destruction, the implementation of Biwako Decade Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five. In sum, Cambodia has been actively contributed to the international community’s effort to address challenges related to disability issues and persons with disabilities.

As a result of this commitment, governmental ministries/institutions employed 2,460 persons with disabilities as of 2013. In addition, persons with disabilities have been given priority in the selection of beneficiaries of social land concession by providing them lands for housing construction and family-based farming at Taken Koh Sla Center, 317 Development Area for Persons with Disabilities in Kulen, Siem Reap and Phnom Chhat, Banteay Meanchey along the provision of occupational rehabilitation service at their communities, physical treatment and rehabilitation, vocational training and development of Braille and sign language that have been incorporated into academic curriculum and media to keep persons with disabilities updated with latest news. Furthermore, children with disabilities also have access to education without discrimination; wheelchair ramps have been built in a number of educational establishments; and deaf and blind children living in designated centers and schools will receive support till they have finished higher education.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to provide some recommendations to contribute to the successful and effective implementation of this strategy as follows:

First, all ministries/institutions and authorities at all levels must start developing detailed an action-plan and prioritize specific disability-related measures to be included in their respective work plans to help strengthen and expand disability prevention measures and create more opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Second, ministerial/institutional disability action working groups and capital/provincial disability action councils are obligated to coordinate information exchange and integrate the National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 into policy programs of respective ministries and institutions. In parallel, there must be regular progress report, mid-term and final review of the implementation of the National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 to ensure the enhanced livelihoods of persons with disabilities.

Third, ministries/institutions must benchmark their existing policies and strategies against the National Disability Strategic Plan to measure progress, identify work to be done and align with the national strategic plan on disability. All ministries/institutions and stakeholders must submit annual progress report on disability work to the disability action council for consolidation.

Fourth, promoting the preparation of regulations for implementing the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including Subdecrees, inter-ministerial decision/Prakas and ministerial Prakas to ensure timely and effective implementation of the aforesaid law. In this regard, I believe the law and its related regulations will contribute to transforming the nature of the service for persons with disabilities from previously considered humanitarian work to a systematic social insurance scheme, which, in turn, can help strengthen their ownership spirit and promote the capabilities of persons with disabilities and their integration into the society.

Fifth, I wish to remind ministries/institutions and the private sector to comply with the requirement of recruiting persons with disabilities at least 2% of the total recruitment for governmental ministries/institutions and at least 1% for the private sector within three years. In this regard, the Disability Action Council must further promote the implementation of the quota of persons with disabilities in the private sector and regular update the share of persons with disabilities in both public and private sector. Ministries/institutions and legal entities must continue implementing and coordinating this work to ensure persons with disabilities can fully participate in all ministries/institutions and organizations.

With connection to the above spirit, I would like to appeal to Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, representatives from ministries/institutions, development partners, civil society organizations, NGOs, and private sector to continue your attention on the disability issues, the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities and incorporation of disability into all levels of development work to build an inclusive society and make the right real. Besides, looking ahead, we have to keep in mind that the implementation of National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018 requires program-based approach, strategic coordination and prioritization of disability actions. Therefore, the Disability Action Council must develop programs and strategic coordination mechanisms to ensure the successful implementation of the National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018.

Before ending, I wish to dedicate this event to our concerted effort to transform the suffering from disability into the golden opportunity for persons with disabilities and all Cambodian people to further promote their capabilities, skills, rights, solidarity, cooperation and ownership spirit. I would like to take this opportunity to express my full support for the effort to improve vocational skills and capacity and encourage all persons with disabilities to strengthen your fighting spirit to live in dignity.

Finally, along the official launch of the National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018, I would like to wish Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, national and international guests, persons with disability, teachers and students the four gems of Buddhist blessing: Longevity, Nobility, Healthiness and Strength.

PHOTO GALLERY



H.E. Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN greeted participants



Saluting National Anthem during opening ceremony



Departure of H.E. Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN



H.E. Em Chan Makara, Secretary-General of Disability Action Council with participants



Welcome speech by H.E. Mr. Vong Sauth,
Minister of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and Vice President of Disability Action Council



Over 3,000 participants attended the Launching



Leaders with Disabilities expressed their full support for Cambodia's National Disability Strategic Plan 2014-2018



APCD/JAIF Steering Committee Members participated in the Launching

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3 July 2014 | Phnom Penh, Cambodia



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